

Soil Conservation

John Sandefur has served as the District Conservationist for Hawkins and Hancock Counties since 1983. His technical services are provided to the District by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, under the United States Department of Agriculture.

Bernice Scalf has been District Office Administrator for over ten years. She served two terms as President of the Tennessee Conservation District Employees Association, received the East Tennessee District Employee of Year Award and the Tennessee Conservation District Employee of the Year Award.

SERVICES:

- Aerial photos, flood plain maps, topographical maps and soil surveys
- Various inventories and assessments of resources in the County
- Technical assistance for conservation purposes (provided free by an NRCS District Conservationist)
- Brochures and literature are available on:

cost share programs; conservation management practices; USDA programs; anti-littering, recycling and waste management; and state or local programs

Conservation districts are legal subdivisions of State government. The Hawkins County Soil Conservation District was established in 1952 and was the first of the 12 Northeast Tennessee counties to organize a district.

Our mission is to make available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and to focus or coordinate them so they meet the needs of local land users for conservation of soil, water, and natural resources.

The District is governed by a five member Board of Supervisors, of which two are appointed and three are elected. Each serves a three year term and receives no salary.

Technical assistance for conservation purposes is provided free by the NRCS District Conservationist on ways to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, and conserve land or habitats. This assistance can include best management practices, nutrient and pest management, prescribed burning, rotational grazing, curbing wind damage, stabilizing streams, managing grasslands, managing animal waste, managing forest land, and establishing wildlife habitats. Assistance can also be provided for urban problems such as run-off or soil erosion due to construction.

The cost share programs include ponds or watering tanks, stream bank stabilization, stream protection, borders and buffers, animal waste storage, grassed waterways, fencing, pasture renovation, critical area treatment, and pasture establishment.

The District and NRCS partner with other agencies to assist landowners with technical advice and cost share. These agencies include Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Forestry Department, Nature Conservancy, TVA, and Farm Service Agency.

Partnership with NRCS and Tennessee Department of Agriculture provided federal funds from 2000 – 2006 in the amount of approximately \$500,000, and state funds in the amount of approximately \$300,000. These cost share funds are put “on the ground”. None of it is used for salaries or operations.

Answers to Frequent Questions:

How do I apply for cost share assistance?

Call or visit our office to speak with the District Conservationist about the project you are planning and complete an application. If you qualify for assistance, the application will be considered by the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting. Decisions are based on established guidelines and the availability of funds. Cost share is on a first come-first served basis.

All programs or services are offered without regard to race, color, age, origin, gender, religion, marital status, handicap, or political beliefs.

Do I have to live on a farm to receive cost share assistance?

You do not have to live on a farm, however, all landowners must meet the criteria for all of the State or Federal cost share programs.

What kind of education and information does the District provide?

The office staff presents programs for all school grade levels, civic organizations and other local clubs, daycare centers, fairs and festivals, local events and farm tours. The District maintains displays on all programs, literature on recycling and waste management, backyard conservation, wildlife habitats, annual reports, composting, soil erosion prevention, and water quality.

The Soil Conservation District does not charge for services provided.

Minimal fees are charged for copies of colored maps or a large quantity of copies.

Landowners can find useful information and answers to questions concerning federal programs at www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov or information on state programs at www.tennessee.gov/agriculture